

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PCH-04 EB-08 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02
SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 HA-05 ICA-11 AID-05
STR-07 OMB-01 CEA-01 TRSY-02 COME-00 FRB-03 /095 W
-----104940 292324Z /70

R 281421Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8189
INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY BANJUL
AMEMBASSY BISSAU
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY COTONOU
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY PRAIA
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECIN, XY
SUBJECT: ECOWAS SUMMIT MEETING

REF: STATE 105766

1. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OUTTARA TOLD EMBOFF HE WAS VERY SATISFIED
WITH SUMMIT MEETING. ASKED WHAT HE CONSIDERED WERE MOST SIGN-
FICANT RESULTS, OUTTARA REPLIED FIRST THAT SUMMIT RESOLVED SEVE-
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RAL INTERNAL STRUCTURAL DEFICIENCIES WHICH HAD TO BE REMEDIED
BEFORE ORGANIZATION COULD MAKE ANY FURTHER PROGRESS. SPECIFIC-
ALLY, ROLES OF EXECUTIVE SECRETARIEAT AND FUND NOW CLARIFIED.
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY IS NOW UNAMBIGUOUSLY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF
ECOWAS AND ALL ITS INSTITUTIONS.

2. OUTTARA NEXT SAID THAT SIGNING OF NON-AGGRESSION TREATY WAS

IMPORTANT STEP IN CREATING PROPER PSYCHOLOGICAL ATMOSPHERE FOR GROWTH OF ECOWAS. TREATY CREATES A CONTEXT WITHIN WHICH ANY FUTURE INTER-MEMBER DISPUTES CAN BE RESOLVED. ASKED IF TEXT OF NON-AGGRESSION PROTOCOL WAS AVAILABLE, OUTTARA SAID TEXT EXISTED BUT IT CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL BY HEADS OF STATE. DECISION ON WHETHER OR NOT IT CAN BE RELEASED TO PUBLIC MAY HAVE TO AWAIT NEXT SUMMIT MEETING IN MAY 1979 SINCE ONLY HEADS OF STATE CAN APPROVE RELEASE. OUTTARA DID SAY MAIN PRINCIPLE OF PROTOCOL WAS AGREEMENT TO ESCHEW USE OF FORCE IN MEMBER COUNTRY RELATIONS. WHEN ASKED IF PROTOCOL ENVISAGED SOME SORT OF FORMAL MECHANISM OR INSTITUTION FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION SUCH AS COURT OF ARBITRATION, OUTTARA SAID NO, DISPUTES WOULD BE SETTLED IN AFRICAN WAY BY COMMITTEE OF SEVERAL HEADS OF STATE.

3. OUTTARA NEXT TOUCHED BRIEFLY, ALMOST SUPERFICIALLY, ON DECISION TO SET MAY 28, 1979 AS DATE FOR TARIFF CONSOLIDATION TO BEGIN, THEN TURNED TO ISSUE OF MOVEMENT OF PERSONS ACROSS NATIONAL BORDERS. HE SAID THAT PRINCIPLE OF FREE MOVEMENT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED EVEN IF NO DOCUMENT SIGNED YET. DOCUMENT HE HIMSELF HAD DRAFTED ON MOVEMENT OF PERSONS, WHICH WAS CAUTIOUS AND CONSERVATIVE, HAD BEEN SCRAPPED AT SUMMIT MEETING. HEADS OF STATE HAD AGREED THEY WANTED TO TAKE A BOLD STEP, HE SAID, ONE THAT WENT WELL BEYOND PROVISIONS OF ORIGINAL ECOWAS TREATY. AS OPPOSED TO TERMS OF ARTICLE 27 OF TREATY WHICH CALLED FOR BILATERAL AGREEMENTS, HEADS OF STATE NOW WANTED SINGLE SWEEPING MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT. WHEN SIGNED NEXT YEAR, SUCH AN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AGREEMENT WOULD DO AWAY WITH NEED FOR VISAS AND PERMIT RESIDENCE IN MEMBER COUNTRIES UP TO TWO YEARS. QUESTION OF PERMANENT RESIDENCE IS STILL BEING CONSIDERED.

4. OUTTARA CONCLUDED THAT MOST IMPORTANT RESULT OF THIS SUMMIT MEETING WAS THAT IT DEMONSTRATED HEADS OF STATE OF VARIOUS MEMBER COUNTRIES HAVE GAINED CONFIDENCE IN ECOWAS AS VIABLE INSTITUTION AND ACCEPTED ITS GOALS. ATMOSPHERE AT THIS SUMMIT, HE SAID, WAS VERY DIFFERENT FROM INITIAL CAUTIOUS SKEPTICISM WITH WHICH HEADS OF STATE VIEWED NEW ORGANIZATION. OUTTARA POINTED OUT THAT SAME NUMBER OF HEADS OF STATE ATTENDED THIS SUMMIT AS ATTENDED SIGNING OF ORIGINAL TREATY, AND THAT FOUR WHO DID NOT COME (FROM GHANA, GUINEA, MALI AND NIGER) HAD GENUINE CRISES ON THEIR HANDS THAT HAD MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO LEAVE HOME.

5. OUTTARA SAID SUMMIT COMMUNIQUE IS BEING REVISED AND REISSUED. EMBASSY WILL PICK UP COPIES AS SOON AS AVAILABLE AND FORWARD TO DEPARTMENT.

6. COMMENT: USUALLY UPBEAT AND CANDID OUTTARA SEEMED MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN EVER DURING THIS CONVERSATION. VOTE OF CONFI-

DENCE WHICH SUMMIT IN EFFECT GAVE HIM IN CLARIFYING EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY'S ROLE VIS-A-VIS HORTON OF FUND NO DOUBT HAD SOMETHING
TO DO WITH THIS.
WYMAN

NOTE BY OC/T: POUCHED AMEMBASSY PRAIA, AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT.

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